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ABSTRACT

A study examined the different degrees of satisfaction with the nominal group technique (NGT) felt by policymakers and change agents with differing professional backgrounds and responsibilities who participated in nominal groups. A total of 206 participants at four conferences at Texas A&M University (international food and water policy, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, English Language Institute curriculum, and school principals' conferences) served as the study population. The conference participants were surveyed with respect to their opinions on the usefulness of NGT, personal involvement with NGT, feelings about NGT versus other group techniques they may have used previously, and non-NGT group activities. The participants at al four conferences expressed satisfaction with the NGT. Although professional background did not appear to influence the degree of satisfaction with the NGT, the degree of understanding of the purpose and procedures of the NGT did have a significant effect on attitude toward the effectiveness of the NGT. Despite the general satisfaction with NGT that was expressed by the majority of participants in all four conferences, there was a consistent thread of dissatisfaction with the use of NGT among some participants across all four groups. This thread of dissatisfaction led to the conclusion that caution should be used in forcing a consensus-generating technique upon group participants who may not place a high value on group unanimity. (Appendixes to this report contain an outline explaining the NGT and a list of the attitude items comprising the four theoretical constructs pertaining to the participants' satisfaction with the NGT. A 34-item reference list is included.) (MN)

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A SUMMARY REPORT OF RESEARCH

EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE AMONG CHANGE AGENTS

by

Jon N. Gresham

Department of Agricultural Education
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2116

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FOREWORD

Increasingly, people responsible for identifying issues, getting solutions to problems, arriving at consensus, or otherwise securing decisions from groups, are concerned about the effectiveness of techniques used to do so. Consequently, the research conducted by Dr. Jon N. Gresham, while a teaching assistant in the Department and summarized herein, is timely.

The findings, conclusions, observations, and recommendations reported by Dr. Gresham will be of interest to program planners, program chairmen, change agents, and others concerned about the effectiveness of the group decision-making process. They provide "food for thought" for people concerned that discussion techniques used in open groups sometimes do not result in satisfied participants. His research on the nominal group technique should increase the confidence of persons using that technique.

For additional information concerning the study, readers are encouraged to contact Dr. Gresham. Inquiries will be forwarded to him through this department.

James E. Christiansen, Professor
Department of Agricultural Education
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2116

November 17, 1986

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INTRODUCTION

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) has been widely used as a tool for identifying and solving problems in agriculture, business, churches, social research, education, health and medicine, and the military service (2,3,4,5,6,7,10,11,12,14,15,16,17,18,20,22,24,25,26,27,29). It has been perceived that educators, change agents, and administrators active in change need a tool like the NGT if they are effectively to foster commitment to change.

It stands to reason that no matter how effective a technique may be for identifying problems or concerns, for establishing priorities, or for solving problems, the satisfaction of the people involved in the process will affect their commitment to and support for any follow-up activities that may occur. However, it was not known if participants in nominal groups were satisfied personally as a result of such participation, and thus, were committed to act according to the consensus of the group. This particular study was important because the degree to which participants in the nominal group process expressed satisfaction with components of that process had not been presented in the literature. Those working with change agents and change agents themselves using groups for planning and decision-making need reassurance that participants in nominal group activities are satisfied with their nominal group experience, because satisfaction of participants is very likely to influence the commitment to carrying out the groups' decisions.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not change agents with differing professional backgrounds and responsibilities, who participated in the structured process of a nominal group in the setting of diverse decision-making and problem-solving conferences, would express personal satisfaction with the technique used.

Consequently, this study was designed to test four hypotheses regarding participation in nominal groups.

HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses, derived from an established theoretical base, were tested using data from surveys of 206 NGT participants in four different conference settings:

1. Within a conference, there would be no difference between previous participation in an NGT and previous non-participation of participants as regards their expressed satisfaction with an NGT.

2. Within a conference, there would be no difference between those expressing an understanding of the purpose of the NGT and those expressing a non-understanding of the purpose of the NGT as regards their expressed satisfaction with an NGT.

3. Within a conference, there would be no difference between the professions of participants with respect to expressed satisfaction with an NGT.

4. Within a conference, there would be no difference between the previously-experienced, interactive discussion group and the nominal group as regards participants' expressed satisfaction with the group activities.

DELIMITATIONS

This study was delimited to an examination of the degree of satisfaction as expressed by 206 participants in four professional conferences held at Texas A&M University between May 1985 and

July 1986. These conferences were selected partially because of convenience, but also, because they involved group training and decision-making activities, problem-solving sessions, participants who were or who could be expected to be change agents and/or decision makers, and who represented several diverse populations.

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Four conferences at Texas A&M University, involving training and decision-making, and concerned with different clienteles, were used to examine the expressed satisfaction of participants with the Nominal Group Technique as a tool for identifying and solving problems. Problem-solving sessions held during the conferences provided an excellent opportunity to test the hypotheses established earlier.

As the research fit the conditions of "careful control and proper sampling" laid down by Guba (10) for a valid scientific study, the procedures and limitations associated with such a study were considered in conducting the research. As the conferences occurred over a period of time, it was possible to refine the instrument and procedures as the study was conducted.

Implementation of the NGT

Trained NGT facilitators conducted the NGT sessions at all conferences, using the standard NGT procedure outlined in references 3, 13, and Appendix A. That procedure included the following steps: (1) silent generation of ideas, (2) round-robin recording of ideas, (3) clarification and discussion of ideas, (4) individual voting on the importance of ideas, and (5) final voting to determine the group consensus.

Instrumentation

Satisfaction with group activities can be affected by the environment, by the content of the activities, and by the process of the group interactions. Therefore, the instruments used were designed to measure the satisfaction of nominal group participants by requesting responses to statements regarding the structure, the personal involvement, the usefulness of the nominal group procedure, and comparison of the nominal groups with other previously used, non-NGT group activities. Under the conditions of the conferences where the nominal groups were used, exact data on the background of participants were not required, thus helping to insure confidentiality of responses.

A twenty-two to twenty-five item "satisfaction scale" was administered to the groups. The instruments were developed with the assistance of faculty and graduate students at Texas A&M University and Dr. John Hoyle (14), who had consulted and published on the use of nominal groups in educational settings.

The instrument consisted of five biographical background questions and seventeen to twenty, five-point, Likert-scale statements on the conferees' attitudes toward the Nominal Group Technique. The number of items varied from conference to conference because of the varying purposes of the conferences, backgrounds of participants, and the nature of other conference activities.

Statement responses ranged from 1, "Strongly Agree," to 5, "Strongly Disagree." To minimize possible bias of responses resulting from the cumulative tone of the items, some of the statements were expressed positively and others negatively. Positive statements were scored 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, starting with the alternative "Strongly Agree."

Conversely, negative statements were scored 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, as a "Strongly Disagree" response to a negative statement actually expressed a positive attitude.

For analytical purposes and to allow comparison of the satisfaction of participants with NGT as used in the four conferences, items on the instruments were grouped into theoretical constructs related to three summary attitudes: "Personal Involvement in the NGT," "Usefulness of the NGT," and "Comparison of NGT with other previously used, non-NGT problem-solving Groups." These groupings were not shown on the instruments in order to prevent a possible bias on the part of the respondents. Appendix B presents representative selected statements used to build the theoretical constructs.

Participants were encouraged to write comments concerning the NGT on the back (reverse side) of the instrument. The reason for encouraging this response was to allow respondants to expand on certain aspects of their nominal group experience that they believed had not been covered sufficiently or not covered at all in the structured statements.

Description of Conferences Studied

International Conference on Food and Water (May 1985)

Conference participants included more tnan two hundred ranking policy-makers, educators, administrators, and change agents from around the world. Trained NGT facilitators conducted the NGT sessions, involving approximately 178 persons, to formulate a consensus regarding the priority of issues in water and food policy. The next day, 110 conferees present who had participated in the nominal groups (62% of the

178) were surveyed using an opinionnaire developed by faculty and graduate students of the Department of Agricultural Education at Texas A&M University. The measurement reflected only the conferees' perceived satisfaction with the NGT, as used at this conference, not their perceived satisfaction if they had been involved in the NGT in other settings.

Texas Agricultural Extension Service District Conference (April 1986)

This TAEX conference was planned as an in-service training conference for the 60 extension agents of TAEX District 10. As part of the training on teaching adults, there were small group activities in which participants were to identify problem areas in working with adults. Following the group activities, participants were surveyed as to their expressed satisfaction with the NGT.

English Language Institute Curriculum Conference (April 1986)

The English Language Institute (ELI) conducted a conference to plan an advanced grammar course. Participants included nine instructors and administrators from the grammar instruction section of the ELI. Interactive discussion group sessions were held to determine the content for the new course. Nominal groups were used by the participants to determine the competency standards for students. Participants were surveyed for expressed satisfaction with the group activities.

Principals' Center Summer Academy (July 1986)

The Principals' Center Academy was held to sponsor professional development activities directed toward instructional leadership, management skills, and self-renewal for practicing principals. The sixty-seven principals attending participated in nominal groups and in interactive discussion groups to explore ideas and assumptions presented in academy lectures and to address issues raised. Forty-two participants were not from Texas A&M University and were the specific clientele for which the conference was held. These 42 were the only participants chosen by the conference administrator to be surveyed. The participants were surveyed for expressed satisfaction with the nominal group activities at the end of the conference.

Unfortunately, the original surveys were lost before this researcher received them. Another survey was mailed out to each of the 42 NGT participants, with a letter explaining the loss of the original surveys and asking them to complete another instrument and return it in the self-addressed, self-stamped envelope provided. Thirty instruments were returned out of the 42 sent out (71%).

Analysis

As the whole populations of the nominal group participants at the different conferences were surveyed and statistical sampling was not involved, descriptive statistics were used.

Analyses of the data were concerned with the independent variables:

1. Conference in which people participated
2. Previous use of NGT
3. Understanding of the purpose of the NGT
4. Background and profession of participants
5. Participation in other group activities.

The statements making up the dependent variables were grouped into indicative constructs of "Attitude towards the NGT" and "Comparison with previous group activities," which may collectively be used as an index of expressed satisfaction. Phi, Pearson, and Point Bi-Serial correlations were performed on the discrete data to test expressed satisfaction with NGT as affected by the independent variables, as well as by interactions with other dependent variables. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, were used to present the distributions of responses to the various items and groupings of items on the opinionnaires.

From these analyses, conclusions were drawn. The .05 level of significance was used to test the null hypotheses.

FINDINGS

The survey instruments used in the four conferences were very similar, and a merging of the significant data pertaining to attitudes and constructs resulting from the four conferences yielded useful information with respect to the hypotheses tested.

At the International Conference: 78% had no prior experience with nominal groups; 70% did not consider themselves as policy makers; 77% were participants only in the NGT, not also in reaction panels; and 94% considered themselves fluent in English.

At the Extension Service conference: 97% considered themselves as extension agents, not specialists or supervisors; 50% had participated in nominal groups before; 96% stated that they understood the purpose of the NGT; 98% had previously participated in group decision-making activities; and 62% expressed a lack of satisfaction with the quality of participation in previous non-NGT, extension group activities.

At the English Language Institute conference: 83% indicated that they worked more as instructors than as administrators; 100% had participated in interactive discussion groups before; 83% had no prior experience with nominal groups; 100% indicated that they understood the purpose of nominal groups; 100% indicated previous participation in curriculum development activities; and 60% indicated that their work load would be affected by the outcome of the conference's group activities.

At the Principals' Academy Conference: 96% indicated that they were administrators only and did not teach classes; 96% indicated that they understood the purpose of the NGT; 63% indicated that they had previously participated in an NGT; 100% had previously participated in

non-NGT activities; 63% were personnel administrators more than they were curricula managers; 52% were satisfied with levels of participation in previous non-NGT activities.

Attitude Elements Pertaining to Satisfaction with NGT

To determine the degree of expressed satisfaction with the nominal groups, four factors (theoretical constructs) were analyzed. The lower the score, the greater the satisfaction. When considering the level of expressed satisfaction level as a whole, there was a positive attitude shown by participants at each conference. Satisfaction was assumed to be indicated by level of agreement of 2.5 or lower expressed on the 5-alternate Likert scale.

"Structure of the NGT" was a construct used only in the International conference, showing agreement with five items related to group size, procedure, and implementation. The mean response was 2.5 on the scale of 1-5. Also at the International Conference, "Usefulness of the NGT" had a mean response of 2.1 for three items, and "Personal Involvement in the NGT" had a mean of 2.8 for its nine items.

The Extension Service conference gave mean responses of 1.8 for the "Usefulness of the NGT," 2.2 for the "Personal Involvement in the NGT," and 2.7 for the "Comparison of NGT with Other Group Activities."

The English Language Institute yielded mean responses of 2.2 for the "Usefulness of the NGT," 1.1 for the "Personal Involvement in the NGT," and 2.8 for the "Comparison of NGT with Other Group Activities."

The Principals' Academy yielded mean responses of 2.2 for the "Usefulness of the NGT," 1.6 for "Personal Involvement in the NGT," and 2.1 for "Comparison of NGT with Other Group Activities."

Respondents expressed agreement with the usefulness of NGT, with a positive comparison of NGT with other group activities, and with a positive view of their personal involvement in the NGT at the conference that they attended.

The three theoretical constructs for comparing mean attitudes of Usefulness of the NGT, Comparison with Previously used, non-NGT Group Activities, and Personal Involvement in the NGT among the conferences are presented in the Table 1 matrix. The number value represents the mean expressed attitude of the constructs on a Likert scale of one to five, with "one" being in "strong agreement."

It should be noted that all of the means of responses to constructs, except one, were on the "agree" side of the scale. The exception was the personal involvement construct in the case of the International Food and Water Policy Conference, and it was "neutral" at 3.0.

The Extension Service participants expressed much agreement with the relative usefulness of the NGT. The ELI participants indicated greater agreement concerning their satisfaction with their personal involvement in the NGT. The Principals' Academy participants indicated more satisfaction with personal involvement in the NGT than the participants in other conferences. Those participants at the Principals' Academy also were in strongest agreement with all three constructs among the four conferences.

The International Conference on Food and Water participants were not asked to compare nominal groups with previous non-NGT activities, so there were no applicable data for that construct. However, those participants had the greatest tendency to move to the "neutral" part of the scale with respect to usefulness of NGT and personal involvement in

NGT activities than did any other group.

Table 1.
Comparison of Mean of Responses to Constructs of Attitude Items Among Four Conferences Using Nominal Groups on a Scale of 1-5, TAMU, 1985 and 1986.

Conference	Construct		
	Usefulness of the NGT	Comparison with other Group Activities	Personal Involvement in the NGT
International Conference	2.6	NA	3.0
TAEX Conference	1.8	2.7	2.2
ELI Conference	2.2	2.8	1.9
Principals' Academy Conference	2.2	2.1	1.6

Note: 1=In Strong Agreement, 3=Neutral in Agreement, 5=In Strong Disagreement

Figure 1 presents the above comparisons in graphic form. All mean values were less than 3.0, indicating that there was agreement, if not strong agreement, regarding satisfaction with each of the theoretical constructs of the "Usefulness of the NGT," "Comparison of the NGT with other, previously used, non-NGT group activities," and "Personal Involvement in the NGT." Participants expressed satisfaction with the nominal group technique, as indicated by positive agreement with statements regarding their nominal group experiences.

Figure 1.
Display of Direction and Intensity of Agreement from Neutrality Among Means of Responses to Theoretical Constructs of Attitude Items Among Four Conferences Using Nominal Groups, TAMU, 1985 and 1986.

Construct	Mean	Agreement SA	A	N	D	Disagreement SD
		1	2	3	4	5
Usefulness	2.6			++++		
of NGT	1.8		**********			
Construct	2.2			&&&&&&&&		
	2.2			<<<<<<<<<		
Involvement	3.0			+		
in NGT	2.2			****		
Construct	1.9			&&&		
	1.6			<<<<<<<<<		
Comparison	NA			(+=NA)		
with Other	2.7			*********		
Group Activities	2.8		&&&&&&&&&&			
Construct	2.1		<<<<<<<<<<<<<<			
		1	2	3	4	5

Note: + = International Conference on Food and Water Conference
* = Texas Agricultural Extension Service Conference
& = English Language Institute Conference
< = Principals' Academy Summer Conference

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, with respect to the purposes and hypotheses of this study, the following conclusions were drawn, applicable to the groups researched in this study. The discussion will focus on the differences found among respondents at the four conferences.

1. There was no significant ($p<.05$) difference between those who had previously participated in an NGT and those who had not, as regards their expressed satisfaction wtih an NGT; therefore null hypothesis 1 was not rejected.

2. Those who understood the purpose of the NGT expressed significantly greater satisfaction with the NGT than those who indicated that they did not understand the purpose of the NGT; thus, null hypothesis 2 was rejected.

3. There was no significant ($p<.05$) difference between the profession of Extension Service participants with respect to expressed satisfaction with NGT; null hypothesis 3 was not rejected for that group. There was a significant difference between the profession of International Conference participants with respect to expressed satisfaction with NGT; therefore, null hypothesis 3 was rejected for that group. The two conferences did reflect different populations. Participants in the Extension Service conference were fairly homogeneous in education, experience, and professional ethos. On the other hand, participants in the International Conference were diverse in nationality, culture, education, experience, and profession.

Professions of the participants at the English Language Institute and at the Principals' Center Summer Academy did not appear to have any significant relationships with satisfaction with the nominal groups.

Background does appear to affect satisfaction with NGT. Those who had previously been exposed to NGT were less skeptical about its use in the conference.

4. It was concluded that there was no significant difference between those who had previously participated in other group activities and those who had not participated in other group activities. Null hypothesis four was not rejected.

Secondary Conclusions

Despite the findings and related conclusions pertaining to overall satisfaction with the NGT drawn above, the fact that a consistent thread of dissatisfaction with the use of the NGT existed among some participants when group consensus was sought caused this researcher to draw secondary conclusions for people using the NGT. One of these secondary conclusions is that caution should be used in forcing a consensus-generating technique upon participants who may not place a high value on group unanimity.

The principals and the Extension agents had the lowest scores, indicating greatest satisfaction with the nominal groups. As their work is "people" oriented, while the participants in the International Conference on Food and Water had the highest scores and their work is "thing" oriented, profession appears to be related to the degree of satisfaction with a consensus-generating approach to problem-solving.

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

The researcher presents observations and recommendations relating to the actual implementation of the nominal group technique and for further research.

Recommendations for Implementation

These recommendations come, in part, from the experiences of the researcher and from comments received from participants in the nominal group activities at the four conferences at Texas A&M University during the two years of this study.

This researcher recommends that change agents consider nominal groups as a technique to enhance group problem-solving and decision-making activities and to obtain greater commitment to follow-through based on the decision of the group.

Nominal group leaders must be trained to lead and control adequately the nominal group activities. The group moderator should maintain control of the group and keep it on track toward the desired final product.

Recording of ideas must be done swiftly, legibly, and in view of all participants. This can be difficult in larger groups, or where many ideas are presented. Large blackboards or sheets of paper taped across meeting-room walls can be useful, but a skillful, swift recorder is necessary in any case. Choosing a recorder for a group and giving instructions as to how to record the ideas generated should be done before the activities begin.

To benefit most from the group setting, interpersonal relationships must be established before the formal NGT session. When a group is quickly thrown together, feelings of insecurity and mistrust are likely

to keep individuals from building an atmosphere of mutual trust and acceptance, an atmosphere useful for consensus-generation as well as the resulting commitment to implement the decision reached.

Observations

The NGT is used to facilitate arriving at a group decision, that is, "a choice between two or more alternatives made by group members, or by a group's leader in consultations with the membership"(28:17). As consensus is reached through a preference ranking of alternatives, following are details which should be considered before employing this nominal group decision-making technique.

The composition of the group may affect whether the individuals are willing and able to support the group over and against their personal inclinations. Some individuals may be too retiring to express themselves under normal one-on-one or free-wheeling group settings, yet, if properly conducted, a nominal group may elicit quite a strong response from these shy individuals, while minimizing the force of opinion from the more domineering individuals in the group.

The situation calling for a group decision may be too urgent to allow sufficient time to gather together an effective group and to conduct the meeting and the correlated activities, especially if the group is just to advise a strong leader.

During the idea clarification/discussion/deliberation phase, group members may exhibit diverse abilities to communicate effectively the purpose and intent of their suggestions, and consequently may not give adequate explanation for other members to understand fully the value of the idea.

Groups may benefit from a short recess during the session, especially between the initial idea clarification stage and the first voting round. This would allow emotions to cool, participants to relax, and for ideas to settle before individuals come together for further discussion and then the voting round.

If individuals wish to preserve the anonymity of their ideas during the idea generation and voting phases, notecards or slips of paper could be collected instead of the normal, verbal interchange.

The nature of the decision to be made may indicate that an autocratic decision may be as efficient as a group decision. In other words, not all decisions need to be made using a consensus approach.

Questions to Consider for Further Research

Regarding areas where further research is needed, the investigator recommends the following questions as points of departure for additional investigation into the satisfaction of participants with group problem- solving activities.

1. Is the relative satisfaction with the nominal group technique expressed by participants a true reflection of satisfaction with nominal groups alone, or is it satisfaction relative to the comparison with previous group activities?
2. Does cultural background override language fluency and directly affect a participant's satisfaction with nominal groups? Participants at the International Conference on Food and Water Policy claiming to be fluent in English indicated that they did not understand the purpose of the NGT, they would not use it in the future, they would not try to persuade others to act according to the consensus of the group, and they did not believe

that working in a group to arrive at a consensus in problem-solving was more effective than working alone. Yet, those same participants tended to express satisfaction with the nominal groups as used in the conference. The cultural diversity of the backgrounds of participants might, upon examination, reveal that in face-saving cultures, such as commonly found in Thailand, an expression of satisfaction might be given regardless of the true feelings of the individual.

3. Would the use of true control groups in the problem-solving process provide a different evaluation of nominal groups, as compared to this study's findings that nominal groups were more satisfactory than other previously-used, non-NGT problem-solving groups?
4. Can a survey instrument be developed that would accurately measure the satisfaction of participants with all types of group problem-solving activities?

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APPENDIX A

NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

Jon Gresham

NGT has six steps:

1. Presentation of the task to be accomplished.

2. Silent generation of ideas for ten minutes. Each participant is charged to silently write down the short phrases or statements which answer the question. The intent is to get as many answers as possible from all group members.

3. Round-robin recording of ideas. The participants are asked to read their ideas, one idea per person at a time. Each will be recorded, and numbered, on the master list. No discussion takes place. One-by-one, each participant either gives an idea or passes until all of the ideas generated by the group have been recorded. No editing of material and no evaluative comments are desired at this time. All participants are encouraged to "hitch-hike" on the ideas of others and add new ideas to the list. The point is to allow all members equal opportunity to contribute to the group.

4. Ideas clarified and discussed. This step is designed to promote a clear understanding of each idea. Over-lapping or similar ideas may be merged.

5. Valuation of relative importance of ideas. Each participant ranks the top five items out of all of those recorded. Five points are given to the relatively most important idea; four points given to the second most important idea; three points go to the third most important; two points go to the fourth most important; one point is given to the fifth most important. The votes, on note cards, are counted and tallied for each item.

6. The process yields a list of answers, in order of ranking.

This final vote summarizes the NGT process: it provides a measure of the relative group consensus as to the value of the many ideas generated, it provides a sense of closure and accomplishment, and it documents the group judgement.

APPENDIX B

Table 2.
Attitude Items Comprising Four Theoretical Constructs Pertaining to Participants' Satisfaction with the Nominal Group Technique.

Usefulness of the NGT

I feel that I would use the NGT myself in the future.
I agree with the purpose of this NGT activity.
I believe that the NGT as used in this conference helped to prepare me to be effective as a leader responsible for coping with change.
I feel that the NGT will be a useful tool in my future group activities.

Personal Involvement in the NGT

I feel that my opinions were made known in the NGT.
I feel that my opinions were valued in the NGT.
I feel that the consensus arrived at through the NGT was better than my personal opinions.
I felt able to express myself freely in the NGT.
I feel that my contribution helped the NGT group.
I am committed to work according to my group's consensus.

Comparison with Previously Used, Non-NGT Group Activities

I feel that my opinions were made known better in the NGT than in previous group activities.
I feel that my opinions were valued more in the NGT than in other, previously-used group activities.
I feel that the decisions reached in previous group activities were better than my personal opinions.
I feel more able to express myself freely in the NGT than in other group activities.
I feel that my contribution helped the NGT group more than it helped other group activities.

Structure of the NGT

I felt that there was not enough time to discuss issues.
I believe that my group was about the right size.
I believe that more attention should have been given to representatives from less-developed countries.
I believe that more attention should have been given to scientists and technical experts.